

- B. Blessing and Adoption together in the church (Eph. 1:3-6).
- i. We have the blessing which God gave to Abraham through Christ Jesus.
  - ii. This blessing doesn't come to you as if you were a culdesac. It comes to you as if you are a distribution center.

Chris Wright: "There is no blessing for ourselves or for others without faith and obedience. Those whom God calls to participate in his redemptive mission for the nations are those who exercise saving faith like Abraham and demonstrate costly obedience like Abraham." (The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative)

### LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Did anything surprise you from this text?
- What are some of the similarities and differences between this scene of Jacob giving the blessing to Joseph's two sons, and Jacob receiving the blessing as one of Isaac's sons?
- Why does this account of the adoption by Israel of Joseph's two sons speak to us as the church as those who are adopted in Christ Jesus?
- What difference might it make if the goal of salvation is restoration and renewal of creation rather than "let's get out of here and leave this place to burn"?
- Why do you think the themes of adoption and blessing are connected in Ephesians 1:3-6?
- What does it mean to say that the blessing doesn't come to you as if you were a culdesac, but as if you are a distribution center?

## Genesis: Truth for Understanding Our World (34)

### God's Future Purposes for Israel

Jerry Cisar — May 6, 2018

Text: Genesis 48

### Introduction

### I. Adoption (48:1-12)

- A. This is an adoption scene.
- i. 1-7 explain that Jacob is adopting them.
  - ii. 8-12 are actually the legal adoption ceremony.
    - a) "Who are these?" is the formal introduction to the adoption ceremony.
    - b) In v12, having these 20+ year old men on/next to his knees is a symbolic element of the adoption ceremony.

It symbolized "his giving them birth in place of Asenath daughter of Potiphra, priest of On." (Waltke, Bruce K. Genesis: A Commentary, 596)

- iii. Why does Israel adopt Joseph's sons?
  - a) *Why would it be important, in God's purposes in saving the world, for Israel to adopt Joseph's two sons?*
  - b) Joseph's sons were not only born and raised in Egypt, they were born to the daughter of a priest of On.
  - c) Throughout this adoption scene, whenever Jacob says or does something related to the adoption, he is called by the name "Israel." They are being adopted into Israel!

- B. This adoption creates a problem.
  - i. Later, Levi is made the priestly tribe w/o an inheritance.
    - a) God's Economy
    - b) 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14
  - ii. But for now, you now have 13.

- d) The record of Isaac's generations: 41:2
- e) The record of Jacob's descendants: 19:1
- iii. This blessing is about the renewal and restoration of creation!
  - a) Abraham
  - b) Jacob
  - c) Joseph
  - d) Paul

## II. Blessing (48:13-22)

- A. What is this whole scene about? *Blessing*.
  - i. What are we asking for, when we ask for *blessing*?
    - a) Ephesians 1:3
    - b) Galatians 3:8-14
  - ii. This is the blessing of Abraham, and it belongs to Israel.
    - a) The younger gets the blessing of the firstborn!
    - b) God has always been about turning over our human power structures.

### B. Blessing and Curse in the story of Genesis

- i. Creation scene (filled with life, flourishing, goodness): 3 occurrences of blessing. 3:0
- ii. The Fall and Cain scene (filled with sin, fear, shame, death, envy, murder): 3 occurrences of the curse. 0:3.

*Blessing has to do with creation and life; cursing with sin and death.*

- a) The record of the generations of Adam: 1:1
- b) The record of the generations of Noah: 2:1
- c) The Abraham story: 21:1.

### C. Ephraim and the Blessing of the Firstborn

- i. David's line from Judah ruled over Judah (Jews). Ephraim's line ruled over the 10 tribes.
- ii. The dying Jacob, who has failing eyes, sees quite well what the purposes of God are.

### D. This blessing is a blessing upon *the Israel of God*.

## III. The Church

- A. Adoption into Israel has been part of Israel from the beginning.
  - i. From the beginning, the tribes of Israel were interchangeable.
  - ii. The northern kingdom of Israel was called by the name of Ephraim, just as the southern kingdom began to be called Jews, after Judah.
    - a) Ephraim was taken into captivity into Assyria, never to be seen again; scattered to the ends of the earth.
    - b) Paul takes verses which were speaking of Israel (Ephraim) being scattered to the nations and then no longer being called the people of God, and then, when it speaks of God regathering them, Paul applies it to the Gentiles who are being brought in (Romans 9:25-26).
- iii. Adoption in Christ into Israel means that we are every bit as much a part of of Israel as if Jacob had us himself. That is why Paul calls the church the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16).